A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, July 28. 1711.

I Have hitherto given you my own Thoughts only, on the Subject of the Trade to the *South-Seas*; it may not be altogether unprofitable, to give you the Sentiments of other People, and therefore I make publick the following Letter, which was sent me, as I suppose, with such a Design.

The Author seems to be of the Opinion of those, who have for some Years past, press'd hard for an Incorporation of *Ireland* with *Great Britain*; a Thing which I confess, has more Justice in it than Convenience; which tho' it were less Just, if it were more Convenient, might perhaps have been done long since; and tho' it were more Just, yet while it is not less Convenient, I cannot see it practicable; but of that hereafter.

The Affair of the Wooll, and the *French* Encrease in Manufactures, their Encroachment on the *Spanish* Trade, and the Consequences drawn from it, I think, are very Just, and therefore I give you the Letter itself, without any Alteration, Amendments, or any Remarks of my own.

The Reader may from all these Things observe, that whatever Value People may put upon the *South-Sea* Trade, as it is a Project,

Project, and as it is in a Time, when we both approve and condemn, not according to the Value of a Thing, but according to the Temper we are in, the Party we are of, and the several Politick Views we have, as to the State; yet other Nations not only put a great Value upon it, but make an infinite Advantage by it, and think no Cost or Pains too much, to Maintain and Support it.

Mr. Review,

" HAving lately Receiv'd several of " your Papers, particularly those re- " lating to the *South-Sea* Trade; and find- " ing that you endeavour to explain that " Matter, and by putting it in a true " Light, give a just Notion of it, I thought " myself oblig'd (as I think every Honest " Man, a well-wisher to his Country " ought) to send you what Hints I could, " to farther enable you to proceed there- " in.

" I find in a little Treatise publish'd a- " bout 5 Years ago, Entitled *A brief Ac- " count of the Woollen Manufactury of En- " gland, with Relation to the Prejudice it re- " ceives by the Clandestine Exportation of " Wooll from* Ireland *into* France, these fol- " lowing Paragraphs.

" The Court of *France* upon our Break- " ing with *Spain*, having form'd several " Projects to supply their new Allies, the " *Spaniards*, with Cloths, enter'd into se- " veral Contracts with them for several " Woollen Commodities, which till that " Time had been furnish'd from *England*, " found themselves under a Necessity, up- " on their Disappointment of being sup- " ply'd with Wooll from *England*, to take " new Measures; and finding that they " could not make their Stuffs and other " fine Manufactures, (as 'tis well known " they can't) without our Wooll, Consult- " ed several *Irish Popish* Merchants, who " having follow'd the Fortune of the late " King *James*, settled themselves in the " Western Ports of *France*, and ever since " have carried on a Clandestine Trade " from those Parts with *Ireland*.

" These being found Persons fit to be " Employ'd, and willingly Engaging to " supply them with *Irish Wooll*, instead of " the *English*, by means of the Assistance " of their Relations, Friends and Corro- " spondents, dwelling on the South Coast " of that Kingdom, several Designs were " form'd, and Methods laid down for the " carrying it on.

" And particularly in the Year 1701, se- " veral of the best Merchants in *France* be- " ing Employ'd by the Ministry there, " had form'd two very Material Projects " for the Ruin of our own Manufactures, " and setting up of their own.

" The first was to Engross the whole " Trade of the *Spanish* Monarchy in the " *West-Indies*, which Design was to be car- " ried on by a Joint Stock of six Millions " of Livres, whereof the King Subscrib'd " two, the King of *Spain* one, and the o- " ther three, by the Subjects of the two " Crowns, and it was forbid, under severe " Penalties, to send any Effects by the " Galleons to the *West Indies*, but what " were of the Growth and Produce of the " two Crowns; and by this, they hop'd " to secure to themselves all the Treasures " of *America*, and as a Consequence of this, " have at this Time above Thirty Ships " Trading in the *South Seas*, and who " bring vast Quantities of Bullion directly " from thence into *France*.

" And the second was no whit inferior " to this, being to Monopolize the Wool- " len Trade, by Engrossing the *Spanish* " Wooll; which Design is likewise to be " carried on by a Company, whose Stock " is Forty Millions of Livres, wherein the " King and other great Personages are also " Concern'd; and the rest of the Subscrip- " tions were carried on by Provinces, " whereof the Province of *Languedoc* has " Subscrib'd five Millions.

" And about the same Time, Orders " were sent to *Roan*, to put a certain Mark " upon all the Goods they sent to *Cadiz* " for the *Spanish West Indies*, and that it

should

" ſhould be Prohibited at *Cadiz* to buy a-
" ny Goods or Merchandizes, but what
" were ſo mark'd; and ſeveral Manufa-
" ctures, as at St. *Malo's*, *Rochell*, *Nantz*,
" and *Bourdeaux*, &c. were ſet up accord-
" ingly.

" Theſe were Noble Deſigns, (tho' by
" our Enemies) and we may thereby per-
" ceive, what Care *France* takes, and what
" Charge ſhe is willing to be at, to Un-
" dermine our Trade and Manufactures,
" and to ſupport her own, and that even
" the King, and the greateſt Perſons do
" not think it beneath them, to concern
" themſelves in Trade.

" And the ſame Author in another little
" Treatiſe, Entitled *Some Thoughts humbly*
" *offer'd towards an Union between Great*
" *Britain and Ireland*, which was Printed
" in the Year 1708. Speaking of the Pow-
" er of *Great Britain* when United with
" *Ireland*, ſays;

" But by this Union, effectual Care be-
" ing taken to prevent that pernicious
" Practice of ſending Wooll into *France*,
" the Manufactures of *France* muſt neceſſa-
" rily fall to the Ground, ſo that *Great*
" *Britain* and *Ireland* will be ſole Merchants
" of the Woollen Manufactures, and all
" that can poſſibly be made by them both,
" will be little enough to ſupply the
" World.

" Nor when this is accompliſh'd, ſpeak-
" ing of the Union, can the *South-Sea*
" Trade (as now it is) be longer Engroſs'd
" by *France*; for 'tis very plain, that by
" bending her greateſt Force, and almoſt
" neglecting all her Trade but that to *A-*
" *merica*, ſhe hopes, by means of a Com-
" munication between the River *Canada*
" and that of *Miſſoſippi*, which empties
" itſelf into the Bay of *Mexico*, to Mono-
" polize all that Trade; and this ſeems
" to be the Deſign of ſending Monſieur
" *Le Salle* ſome time ſince upon that Coaſt
" to ſettle, as well as their Building of ſe-
" veral Forts to cover their preſent Trade,
" on the Coaſts of *Chili* and *Peru*.

" But the Thing I am to obſerve to you
" is, that the *South-Sea* Trade is no ſuch
" Secret as ſome People would have it;
" and had it met with ſuch a Patron five
" Year ago, when this firſt Treatiſe was Pub-
" liſh'd, as it does now, we ſhould not have
" the Trouble that we are now like to
" have, of firſt Removing the *French* Set-
" tlements, as you very well make out, be-
" fore we can make any of our own there.

I am, Sir,
Your moſt humble Servant.

" Upon the Receiving of the above Let-
" ter, I ſent for the ſeveral Treati-
" tiſes therein mention'd, and upon
" peruſal find, that the Gentleman
" who Wrote them is one Mr. *Knox*,
" a Curious and Intelligent Perſon,
" who upon the Information of ſeve-
" ral Merchants and Maſters of Ships,
" who lately come from *France*, Com-
" plaining before the Houſe of Lords of
" a Clandeſtine Exportation of Wooll,
" from the Southern Coaſts of *Ireland*
" into *France*; was in the Year 1703
" ſent into that Kingdom, by the late
" Lord Treaſurer to inſpect that Mat-
" ter, in order to prevent it, and
" who, upon his Return, by Way of
" Journal, Printed his Proceedings
" and Obſervations thereon, to which
" I ſhall referr.

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